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THE CATHOLIC PURGE: MORE DETAILS

Further details about the Catholic purge in China which centered around the arrest of Bishop Ignatius Kung in Shanghai on September 8 have come to hand. In the denunciation meeting in Shanghai on September 9 Protestants Y. T. Wu and Marcus Chen were among the speakers. Mr. Wu said that Bishop Kung was a typical instance of the concealment of counter-revolutionaries inside the Christian church; they must be looked upon as enemies of the people and not as religious devotees. He said, "We cannot allow these counter-revolutionaries to jeopardize our fatherland and the church; if we do, we shall ourselves bear the responsibility for having all these churches washed out."

The mayor of Shanghai, Chen Yi, issued a proclamation on September 9 regarding the Legion of Mary. After reminding people that it had been officially banned on October 8, 1951, he ordered all who were still connected with it to report that connection to the government and to resign from it before September 20. Any one who fails to do so "will be severely punished without leniency."

A number of specific charges have been brought out in the newspaper accounts. During land reform it is charged that Bishop Kung took photostats of all Catholic deeds and mailed them out of the country, saying, "This is evidence which will bring us back our property after the People's Government collapses." On April 27, 1952, he held a special mass in the Ziccawei Cathedral to honor those counter-revolutionaries who had been arrested exactly a year before that date. When Fathers McCarthy, Lacretelle, Deymier and others were arrested on June 15, 1953, Bishop Kung dared to cause disturbances at the place of arrest, shouting reactionary slogans, distributing reactionary leaflets, and preventing public security officers from carrying out their duties. In February, 1954, Father Wang Fang in a sermon compared life under the People's Government to "the soul-less life of dogs and cats." When Father Lacretelle was expelled from China and arrived in Hong Kong in July, 1954, Bishop Kung at once wrote him saying, "While you were going through your trial many good-hearted people were constantly praying for you. I hope that you are in good health and will soon openly lead us again."

Father Chien Sheng-kuan after his arrest confessed that priests were in the habit of condemning the government under the terms of obscure figures of speech. "When we spoke of the devil tempting Jesus, we were referring to the government tempting church members; when we quoted the words of Jesus, "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves," the church-members were the sheep and the Government the wolves. While the Government was not mentioned, still the members would know at once what was meant."

Bishop Kung and his group were accustomed to deny sacrament to and demand confession from any Catholics who took any part in the patriotic movement. Specific instances of this are mentioned in the newspaper accounts, as for example, Father Chang Wei-pin at a Christmas mass in 1952 refused the sacrament to "the patriotic Catholic Tsai Teh-sheng".

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The clever strategy of the counter-revolutionary group is illustrated by the following story: The Catholic progressives were planning a big celebration in Hangchow for Christmas 1952. The counter-revolutionaries wanted to beat them out with a still bigger celebration, and wrote to Shanghai for advice. Father Chen Tien-hsiang answered approving their purpose but criticizing their policy: "Don't fight a battle for which you have not the necessary capital..... If you pursue a 'risk the life' line, may I ask how you will remedy the situation after you have 'risked your life'."

There is one puzzling statement in an editorial in the Shanghai Liberation Daily: "We will ferret out and round up all counter-revolutionaries no matter where they hide themselves, and irrespective of whether they wear a Marxist cloak, as the Kung Pin-mei group did." In what respect could Bishop Kung and his group be said to wear a Marxist cloak?

One of the most sinister aspects of the whole case is the way the Communists are able to convict a person because of things he does not say or do. On December 15, 1954, Bishop Kung issued an announcement designating the coming year as a year of dedication to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In this statement he mentions "love for Christ, the church, religion and heavenly grace, but said not a word about love for the fatherland." Thus, in the eyes of the Liberation Daily, silence is as damning as an open rebellious statement.

Hu Wen-yao is recognized as the leader of the progressive Catholics in Shanghai, and the acting archbishop Li Wei-kuang (who has been excommunicated by Rome) the leader in Nanking.

AN ECONOMIST'S VIEW OF COMMUNIST CHINA

In December and January a number of professors from Hong Kong University toured mainland China as guests of, and at the expense of The People's Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. One of the party was Professor E. Stuart Kirby, Professor of Economics and Political Science. On his return to Hong Kong he gave an address to the United Nations Association of Hong Kong and the University's Economic Society on the subject, Impressions of People's China, which was reported in the South China Morning Post of January 10.

The Cultural Association had entertained them very well, and he estimated that this particular trip must have cost them about 5,000 pounds. Since they had entertained about 3,000 other people in the same way during 1955, they must have spent not less than 750,000 pounds. As a conscientious economist he lost a small amount of sleep wondering what they expected to get out of it in return, and had to admit that as far as he was concerned they didn't get much.

He was rather bewildered by the constant peace propaganda. Adults would greet him with the word Peace, murmured over and over, and even the kindergarten children were taught to greet them with P'i-hsi. He hardly knew how to answer, as he had not written to Emily Post beforehand to ascertain a suitable etiquette. Such characteristic British responses as "Oh rather," "Not half," or "How right you are," somehow seemed inadequate. In fact the only thing more ubiquitous than the peace propaganda and the peace slogans were the soldiers. And next to the Peace slogan the slogan most frequently found was "We shall liberate Taiwan."

He remarked on the "untouchable dogmas" by which they were possessed. These were: The sole measure of progress is industrialization; the large scale - in industry or agriculture, or indeed in any kind of organization - is ipso facto more efficient and more productive, per unit of area, input or investment, than the small scale; there was nothing good or hopeful in the China of the preceding regime; everything had improved since Liberation; foreigners in China, especially Americans, had never done any good in the country, and had been actuated by low motives; conditions in Taiwan were selfevidently worse than those on the mainland. Any view or evidence against these dogmas was treated with contempt, and usually with sheer incomprehension.

It had been stated that all the questions of this University group had been answered by their hosts, and, commenting on that, he stated that formally and quantitatively this was true, but that qualitatively many of the answers left much to be desired. He then gave instances to show how in the case of many of his more searching questions the issue had been evaded.

The large amount of new building of which the Communists have been boasting he found rather drab and uninteresting. The new university quarter west of Peking was, he said, "constructed on the lines of a super-factory estate." Moreover, the overall extent of the building which has been going on does not exceed the world average, and is far less than that which has taken place in North Borneo or Venezuela.

He spoke with more respect of the industrial progress which he saw. He analyzed the sources of this progress as follows: restoration of peace and normal facilities 20%; intensified working, discipline and control 25%; certain common sense practical improvements 15%; fulfilment of plans previously prepared 10%; machinery and skills from Russia and Eastern Europe 50%; but all this to be offset by a debit item due to over-bureaucratism to bring the total back down to 100%.

In spite of all that had been said about advances in mechanization, he had not seen a single tractor, except in an exhibition. Dykes were still being constructed by the "anthill method", each person carrying two baskets of earth.

Completion of plans and projects is a relative term with the Communists. It was announced that the Han River Railway Bridge at Hankow would be open to traffic on January 1. He saw it a few days before that date, and thought that a good deal still remained to be done. A single ceremonial train might possibly be gotten across by January 1, but it certainly would not be open to normal traffic for some time after that.

In regard to Communist China's admission to the United Nations, he said that he still adhered to his former view that this could hardly occur at the cost of displacing the Formosa Government, since the latter - despite its very grave imperfections - represented rather more of the real China than was to be found in the Russianized mainland system, and much more hope for eventual nationhood and selfhood for China. Moreover, bygones were not yet bygones, in respect of what had happened in Korea. He was, however, in favor of bringing Communist China into connection with some of the United Nations' subsidiary organs.

His only reported statement on the churches sounds rather sketchy, and as if he had not given that question much thought while in China. He said, "There are a few churches functioning in Peking, but many of them have been closed, looted, or taken over for public utility purposes."

BEHIND THE BAMBOO CURTAIN

This book (Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1956; $3.75) has as its sub-title The Experiences of an American Doctor in China. It is written by Dr. A. M. Dunlap, known to many of our readers as a professor in St. John's University Medical School while at the same time carrying on an eye, ear, nose and throat practice in Shanghai.

The book is composed almost entirely of quotations from letters which Dr. Dunlap wrote from Shanghai from April, 1949, to October, 1952, when he finally left Shanghai. There is a minimum of introduction and commentary, just barely sufficient to connect in a running historical account the more or less random notes and statements in the letters themselves. The result is a book which might well be rather puzzling and frustrating to one without a China background, but for us "old China hands" he succeeds in re-creating quite vividly the fluctuating hopes and fears of those critical days. The letters are left just as they were originally written, including cryptic remarks intended to confound the censor. For example, when he says that his newspaper that morning had been smeared with Bear Brand jam, he means that the short wave news broadcast from America had been heavily "jammed" by Russian stations.

There is no deep analysis here of the far-reaching changes that were taking place during the three and a half years which the book covers, but simply the day by day recording of the difficulties and frustrations which he met, and the resentments aroused in the author and his friends in Shanghai over the increasing restrictions imposed upon them. He gives full credit to the occasional "human" attitude he found among Communist officials, but on the whole there is a strain of bitterness running through the whole account at the financial losses he was forced to suffer. Of course, when even missionaries have difficulty in learning the lesson of